

CBS NEWS

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File

Dear Professor Van Slyke:

Your most thoughtful and generous letter is gratifying indeed. I cannot imagine a more meaningful response to the China broadcast than those from persons such as yourself. I deeply appreciate your taking the time and trouble to write, as I appreciated your help in the program's formative days.

I, regrettably, must agree with your reaction to the coverage of the China trip itself. It seems to me that television journalism was much better prepared for covering the moon than it was for reporting about China. I'm afraid there was too much television and not enough journalism. I only hope that in the near future there will be the opportunity for more prolonged and substantive efforts. I'm certainly trying to convince the Chinese of that!

It is possible to obtain a print of the broadcast. For rental and loan information, contact:

Miss May Dowell
CBS NEWS
524 West 57th Street
New York, New York 10019

For information regarding sales of the print, contact:

Mr. Murray Benson
CBS Educational & Publishing Group
383 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10017

If you have any questions or difficulty, please let me know. I'll be most anxious to help in any way I can. Again, my sincere appreciation for your letter and interest. I hope we'll have the opportunity to meet again.

All my best,

Irv Drasnin
Producer

Mr. Lyman P. Van Slyke
Associate Professor of History
Director, Center for East Asian Studies
Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

March 31, 1972

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CENTER FOR EAST ASIAN STUDIES

551 Salvatierra St.

21 March 1972

Mr. Irv Drasnin
CBS Television Network
51 West 52nd Street
New York, New York 10019

Dear Irv,

This is a belated, but nevertheless enthusiastic, commendation on your show, "Misunderstanding China." Colleagues and students here at Stanford share my feeling that it was extraordinarily well done, both in production and in content. Charles Kuralt did a fine job of narration. (And don't think I missed the veiled but unmistakable reference to Teddy White) In general, the show made me wish I'd had something more to do with its development. It certainly was needed: the old stereotypes must be broken down. Do I sense, perhaps, the possibility of a flip-over in our perceptions of China, the replacement of "bad" stereotype by a "good" stereotype. Our ignorance of Asia makes such flip images all the more possible.

The show stood in some contrast, I thought, to the live coverage of the visit. Technically impressive and exciting though it was to see China, the commentary on all three major networks struck me as superficial and, as the visit wore on, increasingly crabby. Further, though the reporters are intelligent men, they did not seem very empathetic (Sevareid's comments on Peking University were a disgrace, but there were also many lesser gaucheries). Indeed, one could see more than an echo of the stereotypes to which your show was addressed. Speaking perhaps with the bias of my fraternity, it was disappointing to see so few China specialists in the press corps.

Is there any way that copies of your show might be procured for showing here at Stanford? There would be great general interest in it, and I should particularly like to use it in my spring quarter course, "China and the United States." Requests like this are a bother, and I'd appreciate any response you could make.

Once again, best wishes, and congratulations.

Sincerely yours,



Lyman P. Van Slyke
Associate Professor of History
Director, Center for East Asian
Studies

LPVS/ey